

The New York COMMUNIST

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Scuttling the Ship

COMRADES:—There is hardly a Party member who does not know that the trend within the Party for the last several months has been toward revolutionary and uncompromising Socialism. We have all been taught a great lesson by the Scheidemanns and Kautskys of Germany, the Hendersons of England and Socialist-patriots the world over. We know that that brand of "Socialism", the kind that always trades and compromises with the capitalist classes, and the supporters of which, in times of war and revolution, do not hesitate to go hand by hand with their imperialistic governments and revenge themselves upon comrades of such sterling character as Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg and others, we know that "Socialists" believing in this kind of "Socialism", are not to be trusted with our Party management.

And so for many months a struggle has been going on in our Party in this country between the revolutionary element and the opportunists who control the Party machinery. The members of the Party, having learned that Scheidemann "Socialism" means defeat instead of victory for the working class, have taken a radical and revolutionary attitude in line with the new International. This radical stand on the part of the Party members has been named the "Left Wing" within the Party. The Socialists in most large industrial centres have joined the Left Wing. Boston, Cleveland, Buffalo, San Francisco, Oakland, Portland, Philadelphia, Detroit, Seattle and scores of other Locals and even State organizations of our Party have officially adopted the Left Wing program.

The Russian, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Polish Hungarian, South Slavic and Lettish language federations of the Socialist Party, containing over 30,000 members, also uphold this Left Wing position. These federations and the comrades in them, knowing the situation in Europe, have for a long time requested the Socialist Party in this country to take a definite stand upon the side of the Lenin and Liebknecht Socialists of Europe.

It was because these seven language federations of the Party criticized the national executive committee for its straddling of this important question, that seven members of this committee suspended these federations at its meeting, May 24 to 30th.

If this matter were not so serious it would indeed be laughable. We submit to you, comrade, that it is rather funny for a little group of seven desperate men to suspend over *thirty thousand* members from the Socialist Party. Such an act has never been perpetrated upon the Socialist Party before. Never in the history of the Party has a set of officials acted in such a high-handed and autocratic manner. Let it be indelibly impressed upon your brain, comrade—seven men suspended over *thirty thousand* members from the Party—and seven is only a minority of the National Executive Committee.

This is not the worst of it. Here is what this autocratic group of seven National Committeemen did:

1. They suspended seven language federations, containing over 30,000 members, from the Socialist Party.
2. They refused these federations a trial.
3. They refused to give these federations a chance to prepare their case.
4. They refused to postpone the suspension until the Executive Committees of the federations could act in the matter.
5. The autocratic National Executive Committeemen even went so far as to fail to give any of the federations a copy of the charges while the debate on the motion to suspend was being acted upon.
6. They also expelled the Socialist Party of Michigan, containing about 6,000 members without a trial.
7. This group of seven suspended the entire election of the officials of the Socialist Party under the clumsy excuse that the votes cannot be tabulated because some branches and locals voted as a unit and for candidates not the choice of the reactionary group of seven.

In short, this group of seven National Committeemen, drunk with power they assumed, feeling aggrieved because these federations dared to criticize

the National Executive Committee, made themselves guilty of an act which will discredit them forever in the International Socialist movement.

We say that even if we were guilty of acts not in conformity with the constitution, and *this we deny*—but even if we were guilty of such acts, *we had a right to a fair trial with notice that charges were to be placed against us.* No Party members will say that we have not the right to a fair trial and the right to time to prepare our case. Every capitalist court gives this right, but it was denied us in the Socialist Party.

The charges against us, which we have been allowed to see, since we have been convicted and suspended, contain numerous counts so misleading and far-fetched that it is useless to reply to them.

Call for a National Conference of the Left Wing

Call for a National Conference of the Left Wing of the American Socialist Party, issued by Local Boston, (Louis C. Fraua, Secretary); Local Cleveland, (C. E. Ruthenberg, Secretary); and the Left Wing Section of the Socialist Party of New York City, (Maximilian Cohen, Secretary).

The international situation and the crisis in the American Socialist Party; the sabotage the party bureaucracy has practised on the emergency national convention; the N. E. C. aligning our party with the social-patriots at Berne, with the Congress of the Great Betrayal; the necessity of reconstructing our policy in accord with revolutionary events,—all this, and more, makes it necessary that the revolutionary forces in the Socialist Party get together for counsel and action.

This call is therefore issued, for the holding of a National Conference of the Left Wing of the American Socialist Party, to discuss:

- 1.—The crisis in the party, and action thereon; the conquest of the party for the party, for revolutionary Socialism.
- 2.—The New International; ways and means to prevent the party aligning itself with the "International" of the social-patriots, of the Ebert-Scheidemann gangsters, and the wavering centre; affiliation with the Bolshevik-Spartacan Communist International alone.
- 3.—The formulation of a declaration of principles and purposes of a national scope of the Left Wing of the American Socialist Party.
- 4.—Forming some sort of a national council or bureau of the Left Wing for propaganda, securing of information and spreading information.
- 5.—To express and draw together the revolutionary forces in the party; to consider other means of furthering the cause of revolutionary Socialism.

This call is issued to locals of the Socialist Party, branches and Left Wing groups within the party. The test of admission, provisionally, will be acceptance of the Manifesto of the Left Wing of the Socialist Party of Greater New York.

Left Wing locals are invited to send delegates officially. Where a local officially refuses to participate, branches or minority groups in the party accepting the principles of the Left Wing should send delegates.

Representation—one delegate for every 500 members. No local or group should send more than four delegates. Locals or minority groups with less than 500 members are entitled to one delegate.

The conference will be held starting Saturday, June 21, in New York City. Each delegate will be taxed \$25 for a central fund, out of which will be paid the expenses of all delegates.

Left Wing Locals and Branches, act! Send communications to Maximilian Cohen, 43 West 29th St., New York City.

In the main we are charged with being Left Wing Socialists and with making propaganda in the Party for Left Wing Socialism. We are further charged with trying to capture the Socialist Party. To this we answer that we did do all we could legitimately do to place the administration of our Party into the hands of real comrades who are in full harmony with revolutionary Socialism. And

Other Branches Please Copy

At its regular meeting, June 10, the 6th A. D. Branch 1, Kings, after listening to Ship-laceff and Cook, unanimously voted to resist re-organization and call upon other branches of Local Kings to do likewise.

we only wish we had succeeded in this long before now, for the acts of the seven autocrats on the National Executive Committee must prove to every comrade that a change in Party administration, its program and tactics, is very much needed. The counts in the charges claiming we violated the Party constitution do not apply at all, and the autocratic seven stretch the constitution in an effort to make it apply to a case they wanted to trump up against us.

We claim that the true reason for our suspension is that the autocratic seven of the National Executive Committee know that if we, the Revolutionary Socialists, were permitted to remain in the party, the opportunistic clique would not control the coming National Convention, and that our suspension was voted so that moderate, reform, traitor "Socialism" would prevail in that Convention. In fact, several of the autocratic seven openly stated that we were suspended so that we would not be able to control the coming National Convention.

And now—what do you think of this comrades? We were suspended by this autocratic seven; but they were not satisfied with that—they fired us out of the National Headquarters, and we had to look around for other quarters. We had an idea that suspension was only a temporary state and that we might some day be reinstated either by the membership or the National Convention. In such case we might have been allowed to remain in the National Headquarters building to carry on our work until the membership or the National Convention gave its decision upon the acts of the reactionary seven. But no, we were fired out of the building by a motion passed by this group of seven and a motion to give us to July 1st to find other quarters was lost.

We call upon all Party members to give this protest of ours the attention it deserves. We call upon you to rebuke these seven National Executive Committee members for their traitorous actions against the Socialist movement. We have given our unstinted financial support to the Socialist Party in all matters, even though we thought that in many instances the funds were squandered or misapplied. We have not helped as much as we could in purchasing the National Headquarters building because we wanted first to make sure where the ownership rested. That we were right in being slow to support the headquarters fund is now proven by the fact that this same autocratic seven placed the entire property in the hands of a board of directors which can in no way be controlled, either by the Party membership or the National Executive Committee.

We feel assured that no member of the Party will contend that seven members of the Party have a right to suspend over *thirty thousand* and expell nearly *six thousand*, even if those seven are National Executive Committeemen.

Think of this, comrade! Do we elect our officials to serve us, to build up the Party, or do we elect them to disrupt us and split our forces?

We will gladly give further information, should you desire to get clear upon the points involved in this controversy. But the main question will remain this: *Shall seven desperate party officials be permitted to suspend over thirty thousand and expell six thousand members without giving them a trial or a chance to prepare their side of the case so that the party membership may be fully informed?*

The autocratic seven upon the National Executive Committee acted in a more tyrannical manner than any officials of our party have dared to act up to now.

Protest against this action. Rebuke the autocratic seven. Let us make our Party, a Party of Revolutionary Socialism.

Fraternally submitted,

Joseph V. Stilson, for the Lithuanian Federation; Alexander Stokliisky, for the Russian Federation; Leo Frankl, for the Hungarian Federation; Paul H. Ladan, for the Ukrainian Federation; Geo. Selakovich, for the So. Slavic Federation; Otto Purin, for the Lettish Federation; Jos. Kowalski, for the Polish Federation.

Chicago, Ill., June 2, 1919.

The New York COMMUNIST

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Bombs!

SOME time ago a handful of impatient patriots, outraged at the "pacifist" and "pro-German" attitude of Senator Hardwick of Georgia—who, with La Follette, was one of the "willful twelve" in Congress opposed to the War—and also that of Frederic C. Howe, who wrote "Why War?" and denounced the dollar-patriots—sent bombs to these two gentlemen. One of the bombs exploded and blew off the hand of Senator Hardwick's colored maid. Other patriots saw an opportunity to turn public sentiment against the "Reds"—since the word "Bolshevism" seemed to have lost much of its terror; they therefore constructed a series of fake bombs just like those in the papers, addressed them to some prominent citizens, and deposited them in the Post Office, where they were duly discovered and did no harm.

This was on the eve of May Day, when the impatient workers were beginning to stir for a number of reasons—Debs, Mooney, unemployment, reduction of wages, and other manifest grievances. The ruling class of this country feared a general strike, or at least mass-demonstrations.

Now a second series of bombs are discovered, most of them planted to explode before the houses of the designated victims. There are no victims except one of the planters, a watchman, and some innocent passerby.

The country is up in arms. The capitalist papers are full of provocative statements concerning "anarchists" and "Bolsheviki," and the heavy artillery of capitalist publicity is screaming for the suppression of the Labor movement. The manhunt is on, and anyone who is particularly active as a working-class champion is liable to be railroaded for a long prison term.

Is this second series of bombs also a "frame-up"? Certain facts point to this explanation.

In the first place there is the contemporary discovery, in the Grand Central Station, of alleged "credentialed" issued by Lenin to one Harold Keyes, appointing him Bolshevik agent on a secret mission in the United States. This is characteristic; Harold Keyes has been notorious, during the War, for having been expelled from all radical organizations here as a Government spy; in one case we know of, he offered an imprisoned Comrade his freedom if he would spy upon a certain group of revolutionists in Philadelphia. In the second place, among other lesser lights, one bomb was exploded at the house of Attorney General Mitchell Palmer, who is on the eve of being investigated by Congress for his alleged misuse of Government funds while Alien Property Custodian. And in the third place, more important than all, there has been a strong and growing sentiment in Congress in favor of the repeal of the Espionage Act—which has been of such great value to the capitalists of this country, during the War, not to halt the activities of German agents here, but to crush the Labor and Socialist movement. Various "sedition" and "treason" laws are now up for consideration in Congress, but until the present series of dynamite explosions, there seemed to be little chance of passing them. The present "bomb outrages" are a Godsend to the ruling class of the United States.

Much is being made of the fact that a certain Western District Attorney prophesied the present bomb explosions several months ago. His name is not given in the papers, but we happen to know it. The prophet was Major A. Lowrey Humes, director of the provocative proceedings of the famous Overman Committee. Why is he not investigated by Chief Flynn? Perhaps he knows more about these bombs than he has told . . .

If these "bomb outrages" are a provocation, it would be in accordance with the best traditions of the American ruling class in its war upon the

workers. The Haymarket bombs of 1886 were such a provocation; William Wood, President of the American Woolen Company, "planted" dynamite during the Lawrence strike; and the San Francisco Frame-up is still recent.

If the bombs were not a "frame-up," then there are two comments to make. First, individual acts of terrorism are contrary to the ideas of all revolutionary Socialists. The death of individual capitalists does not harm the capitalist system; the system must be overthrown by the action of the workers organized as a class-conscious mass, for the purpose of inaugurating the Proletarian Dictatorship. The Bolsheviki in Russia have always opposed, and since they came into power, sternly suppressed such tactics. And secondly, organized bomb-throwing is the inevitable result of tyranny, and cannot be cured by more tyranny.

Finally, allow us to call attention to the front page of all capitalist newspapers for the tragic day. In the left hand column, a sensational story of eight bomb explosions, in which two or three people lost their lives, by "the criminal acts of anarchists." In the right hand column, an account of an explosion of powder in a mine, caused by the mining company's disobedience of the law—eighty-four workmen dead.

Watch the newspapers. Somebody will get punished for the bomb-explosions. Nobody will get punished for the mine disaster . . .

"The Call" Theorizes

AS a result of the Left Wing agitation, the association which owns *The New York Call* came to the conclusion that the paper must take a stand on the Party crisis and also devote itself in some measure to the consideration of Socialist theory and tactics. Since this decision *The Call* has made several attempts to criticize the Left Wing, but so far it has carefully kept away from the "dangerous" subject of Socialism.

The first attempt was a signed article by Comrade Oneal in which he attempts to justify the actions of the National Executive Committee. Beyond the fact that he charges us with keeping our imprisoned comrades behind the bars, Oneal adds nothing to the "apologia" spread broadcast by the N. E. C. It is therefore unnecessary to deal with it here, beyond to remark that most of our political prisoners are in jail for standing behind the St. Louis platform, which has been sabotaged by the Party officialdom ever since its adoption.

The latest indictment of the Left Wing is given much editorial prominence. It occupies the first column of *The Call's* editorial page, and is apparently considered to be very important by the editorial staff. It is headed "A 'Left Wing' Importation" and is a complete expose of how we came to use the term "Communist". It appears that the Left Wing imported it from Russia where it sprang into being owing to the life of the Russian villages.

After devoting half the column to the various parties and religions that have made their appearance in American life, *The Call* comes to the Left Wing, and indicts us for foreign importation. "The same hazy mental status is displayed in importing the phrase 'Communist Socialism' from Russia. There are two reasons why the word 'Communist' has been recently employed by the Soviet Party. Just as in 1847 Socialists had to distinguish themselves from the various utopian groups that called themselves 'Socialists,' so the Russian Bolsheviki have reverted back to the word 'Communism' to distinguish themselves from the social-patriotic parties of Europe. The second reason is that the village communes of Russia always have been more or less communistic, and will be more so with the socialization of land and village services. But however much Communism may be fostered in the village life of Russia, it is certain that the Bolsheviki, by using the term, do not intend to communize all wealth, and in particular the wealth of the industrial centers."

Apparently *The Call* is unaware that Karl Marx invariably referred not to "Socialists" but "Communists." Doubtless he imported it from Russia while he was still under Russian influence and subsequently becoming de-Russianized, accepted the term "Socialism". We have always been under the impression that in the Socialist movement the terms "Socialism" and "Communism" were used interchangeably.

With the first reason given by *The Call* we are in entire agreement, except for the fact that it is not the revolutionary Socialists of Russia alone, who are now using the term to distinguish themselves from the reactionaries, who are disgracing the name of Socialism. The Spartacans of Germany use the name Communist Labor Party, as does the revolutionary section of the Dutch Socialist movement, but doubtless they also use the term because of the primitive methods of production used in those countries. We use the term for exactly the same reason as our continental comrades are using it. To distinguish us from those who have dragged the name "Socialism" in the dust of petty bourgeois, social reform. All the traitors to Socialism are not in Europe, as the Bolsheviki recognized when they ignored the official Socialist Party in their call for a Communist Congress.

In its second reason for the use of the name "Communist" by the Bolsheviki, *The Call* gets into deep water and is forced to rescue itself by denying in the second sentence what it affirms in the first. After referring to Russian village life, *The Call* suddenly remembers that there are one or two industrial centers in Russia: "But, however much Communism may be fostered in the village life of Russia, it is certain that the Bolsheviki, by using the term, do not intend to communize all wealth, and in particular the wealth of the industrial centers." In other words the Russians use the term "Communism" because it suits the rural life of the country and also because it does not suit the life of the industrial centers!

It would be interesting to know where *The Call* gets its definition of Communist. Not in "The Communist Manifesto" surely? Of course we are not infallible, but in the copy we read we cannot find anything about the necessity of using the same tooth-brush as our next door neighbor. It would be also interesting to know where *The Call* gets its definition of Socialism. We hope it is not going to blame Karl Marx. Under Socialism *The Call* informs us "The wealth produced would go to those who participate in its production and would be the private possession of the producers. . . Communism permits of no private wealth whatever. Everything is owned in common."

We had hitherto been of the impression that under Socialism all things which were socially necessary would be owned and controlled socially, but we never thought it was intended that all the button-holes made by a particular young woman should become the private property of that young woman, and that she would be forced to go out and trade them with a baker in order to get the morning rolls. Socialism, according to *The Call* prescription, will be rather inconvenient, but Communism will be a thousand times worse. If Communism is anything like what *The Call* imagines, then we can share its indignation against the Left Wing. "Everything is owned in common." Surely *The Call* does not mean everything?

The Regular Party Channels

WHEN the ruling capitalist class in a modern political democratic nation finds itself threatened with defeat at the hands of the working class making use of its economic power, it screams: "Don't strike! Vote! Use the regular political machinery, which permits the righting of any wrong!"

When the Socialist Party officialdom finds its hegemony threatened by the concerted and organized power of the rank and file, it screams: "The Party constitution and by-laws provide opportunities to remedy any wrongs! Use the regular Party channels!"

Very well. Local Boston issues a call for a National Emergency Convention. The call is thrown out on a technicality. Other Locals join in the call, and it cannot be further denied. National Secretary Germer privately urges that the Party "leaders" discourage this convention. Nevertheless the demand grows.

There is a Party referendum vote for national and international officers. The candidates nominated and supported by the Left Wing are seen to have an enormous majority. In the meanwhile Local after Local joins the Left Wing, and State after State falls in line. The Party officialdom, through the use of the "regular Party channels", is apparently going to lose its jobs. And the National Emergency Convention is evidently going to be captured by the Left Wing.

What can be done, through the "regular Party channels"? The Party officialdom begins by expelling Left Wing Branches. Then it counts the votes; and those Branches whose votes are overwhelmingly "disloyal" are accused of having falsified their votes, or forged their ballots—and this accusation is given out to the capitalist newspapers.

Then all the foreign language Federations except the two Right Wing Federations—the Finnish and the Jewish—and doubtful ones—the German and the Italian—are expelled from the Party; more than 30,000 members, one-third of the Socialist Party of America, are thrown out of the Socialist movement. The German Federation, having adopted the Left Wing Manifesto, is the next slated to go; and the Italian Federation, which displays "Left Wing tendencies", is also threatened.

Michigan State organization is expelled. Locals Buffalo, Rochester, Queens and Kings follow. Locals Cleveland and Cook County (Chicago) are on the toboggan; and all other Locals and Branches are being "reorganized" in such a way as to leave most of their members out on the outside.

In this way the votes of the majority of the Socialist Party are outlawed. In this way the Emergency National Convention is made "Safe for Social Democracy."

In this way "the regular Party channels" are made innocuous for all purposes except to support the Socialist bosses who have betrayed and wrecked the Socialist Party.

A Reply to a Non-Partisan League Farmer

By Jay Lovestone

I. Do we hold that the revolution must come by violence?

To answer this question by "yes" or "no" would be asinine. It may. Again, it may not. The left wing, all the protest of the Right Wing to the contrary notwithstanding, repudiates Socialism by assassination. The Left Wing hopes that the proletariat will conquer its enemy, the capitalist class, with as little bloodshed as possible. Except for the capitalist-imperialist statesmen, we know of none who delight to bathe in blood—of others. As Socialists, let us take our guidance from history for a correct answer to this question. A careful perusal of the periods of revolution will show that revolutions, in themselves, do not bring about bloodshed. There is abundant historical proof to show that it is the counter-revolution that always causes bloodshed. Bloodshed only follows when the deposed regime attempts to overthrow the revolution. For us in America, peaceful Anglo-Saxon England, the classical example of revolutions without bloodshed or violence, furnishes particularly strong evidence substantiating our contention. In Cromwell's days no one desired civil war except the Royalists. The King fled to organize an army to march against London. By this action civil war was forced upon the revolutionary party. Remember that only Charles' treachery and intrigues forced Cromwell to carry out his threat against the King:—"We will cut off his head, with the crown upon it".

The most recent proof of this historical truth is furnished by Russia and Hungary. In Russia bloodshed accompanied the Revolution because of the treachery and intrigue of the deposed regime of the bourgeoisie and landholders. A bloody trail follows Kolchack's thrusts. The Red Terror was an answer to the counter-revolution encouraged by Clemenceau, Wilson and George, "the three great representatives of the three greatest democracies of the world".

To date there has been very little violence in Hungary. But should the counter-revolution rear its ugly head, the Hungarian proletariat will no doubt show its valor and prowess. Yes! Only history can answer this question affirmatively or negatively. And in America, as elsewhere, it is the bourgeoisie who will play the leading role in this historical act. Upon them alone will fall the responsibility for violence should it accompany a proletarian revolution in America.

II. Do we hold that the Revolution must come by the General Strike?

Neither can this question be answered correctly by an immediate "yes" or "no". The General Strike is no doubt a powerful weapon in the hands of the proletariat. The General Strike is without question dreaded by the capitalist class. Notice how the murderous bourgeois-Socialist "democracy" of Germany trembles at the General Strike. Recall the chill sent through the backs of the American bourgeoisie by the Seattle strike. Witness the consternation in the camp of Canada's bourgeoisie as a result of the Winnipeg affair. The Left Wing doesn't say that the revolution must come by the general strike. But the Left Wing does say that there is enough historical proof to show that the General Strike is a very valuable weapon in the hands of the working class. Should conditions demand a general strike in order to undermine the bourgeoisie, then well and good, the Left Wing is for it. It is the purpose of the Left Wing to make the proletariat of America class conscious enough to resort to the general strike whenever the situation calls for it.

III. If so why nominate candidates at all and enter politics?

Whether the first two questions are to be answered by "yes" or "no" only the future can tell, but whatever history's answer will be, the Left Wing does believe in nominating candidates and entering politics. To the Left Wing the struggle for seats in bourgeois parliaments is a gauge, measuring working class maturity. The parliamentary method may not be a perfect method (and we certainly say that it is not perfect) of testing proletarian hopes and readiness. We are aware of the numerous bars set up by the bourgeoisie. Yet it does show to what fervor the class struggle has been worked up, and to what temperature class weapons have been heated. While Communism will reject parliamentary government, it will not destroy all of its elements. Communism will make an unprevented use of the only good characteristic of Parliamentarism, the representative element.

The Left Wing gladly welcomes the opportunity of "participating in election campaigns for the immediate purpose of winning legislative seats. In this sense, too, we urge the use of political action as a revolutionary weapon". A real Socialist, a Left Wing campaign will emphasize the implacable

character of the class struggle and will become a great channel for propaganda. To the Left Wing the battle for legislative seats will be a means of arousing revolutionary mass (class) action on all fields. Parliament to us is a forum for agitation. It is a means of obstructing capitalism and not a means of introducing Communism. Participation in election campaigns gives us a chance to put our case before the working class and promote class consciousness without violence.

But participation in political campaigns is not the only form of political action. To the Left Wing any action on the part of the proletariat which aims to undermine and overthrow the political power of the Capitalist class is political action. Thus a strike of miners and railway workers to win freedom for the Class War Prisoners, is a political act in spite of the fact that thousands of "foreigners" and non-voters may participate in such political action. By participating in political campaigns we are also more able to expose diplomatic trickery, cheating, and knavery. What is more, the parliamentary offices can be used to political advantage for the proletariat by employing them as a means of protesting against "the absolutism which hides behind the parliamentary forms".

In short the Left Wing, not being Anarcho-Syndicalist, will gladly use the election campaigns to increase the latitude of its revolutionary propaganda.

IV. We have always believed that fifty-one per cent can vote Socialism into existence. Is that not so?

This is not so. First of all, it is most improbable that a class conscious proletarian political party can ever get a majority of the ballots cast. Remember that as long as capitalism lasts the workers will not own their jobs. We have a notion that there is some connection between the fear of losing a job and a vote. Of course the powerful press, ever serving the master class, also has something to say as to how the ballots are to be cast. The educational institutions mould the workers' minds to no small extent. And this has a marked influence upon the voter. The church and sundry other organs of public opinion complete the bourgeois task of misleading the proletariat. Furthermore, poll taxes, educational, and residential qualifications, legal technique, theft, corruption, and disenfranchisement always come to the rescue of the bourgeoisie. Such are the insuperable barriers confronting class conscious proletarian political parties.

But for the sake of argument, let us grant the almost impossible—that the fifty-one per cent vote can be secured. It most decidedly does not follow that Socialism is thus brought into existence. The

differences between Socialism and Capitalism are so definite that the indefinite and unsteady wave of campaign victories cannot determine them. If fifty-one per cent could vote capitalism out of existence in 1920, why cannot fifty-one per cent vote capitalism back into existence in 1924? Why can't this process go on *ad infinitum et ad nauseum*? Truly common sense yells for help!

In Finland the Socialists won a majority of the seats in the Diet. And to-day the assassins of the Finnish proletariat are drilling in Labor's Hall. After more than fifty-one per cent of the Finns had voted Socialism into existence and Capitalism out of existence, the hellish White Guard of the Finnish Bourgeoisie began to menace Petrograd and to strike a blow at the heart of the Proletarian Republic of Russia.

Why is this so? In the answer to this question lies the vital difference between moderate "Socialism" and revolutionary Socialism or Communism. We must look into the relationship of the state to the class struggle. Here let us again call on history for an answer. The story of the Paris Commune is most enlightening. It shows clearly that the proletariat cannot simply take hold of the ready made state machinery and make use of it for its own ends. Scientific investigation clearly shows that the State is not at all a power foisted on society from the outside. It is not an organ taking root in Heaven. And it cannot be used by every one and any one anywhere at anytime and for any and all purposes. The State takes root in the material conditions and is a product of society at a certain stage of evolution. "The State is a real organization of defense to guarantee and perpetuate a mode of association, the foundation of which is a form of economic production". In capitalist society the State is an organization for perpetuating the capitalist mode of production. The State is capitalist society. The Capitalist State serves the bourgeoisie as a machine for oppressing the proletariat. This holds true in a republic as well, as in a monarchy. "The Modern State is only the organization, bourgeois society forms in order to support the external conditions of the capitalist mode of production against the encroachments, as well of the workers, as of the individual capitalist." With the development of modern industry class antagonisms become intensified and widened. "The State power is more and more turned into an organ of Capital's mastery over Labor. Of a public force organized for Social enslavement, of an engine of class despotism."

Witness the Espionage Acts, the Orders in Council, the Criminal Anti-Syndicalist Laws, the War Labor Boards, the State Cossacks, the use of troops as strike-breakers, the citizens and witch-hunting investigating committees to protect the "public".

The capitalist state does not end within the four walls of the Parliament building. The army, the navy, the police, the courts, the sundry justice dispensers, the prisons, the administrative and financial bureaucracy, and the countless agencies of propaganda and misinformation are part and parcel of the capitalist State. In short this State is the total power of the owning (capitalist) class. The declaration of confiscation of bourgeois property is merely a judicial act. Every single bourgeois will have to be expropriated is actuality—individually. A majority of the delegates to Congress without the possession of the last mentioned agencies will not give the working class the political power or control which it must have in order to gradually introduce Communism. Remember that the bourgeoisie do not control these means of baffling and thwarting the will of the masses because they have a majority in the legislative chamber. On the contrary the Capitalist class has a majority of the votes because it has control of these means of suppressing the will of the masses.

A study of the State's historical development shows that the society in which there is a State "is hopelessly divided against itself, has entangled itself in irreconcilable contradictions which it is powerless to banish. In order that these contradictions, these classes with conflicting economic interests, may not annihilate themselves and society in a useless struggle, a power becomes necessary that stands apparently above society and has the power of keeping down the conflicts and maintaining order. And this power, the outgrowth of society, but assuming supremacy over it and becoming more and more divorced from it, is the State."

The State divided its members by territories and created a public power of coercion that is diametrically opposed to a self-organized and armed population. The State is a product of class society, and with the division of society into classes it is impossible to have a self-organized army of the people. Hence a special power of coercion becomes a necessity in every State.

(Continued on page 6)

Sincerely yours, D. I. Todd.

Why Political Democracy Must Go

By John Reed

VII.

HAVING in former articles traced the failure of the small property holders, Labor and the Socialists to gain control of the Government in America, it is now necessary to indicate how the few great capitalists are able, in the most advanced political democracy of the world, to withstand the pressure of all other classes, either alone or combined—in other words, just how political democracy fails to assure a government by the majority.

When Karl Marx said that the modern capitalist state was "nothing less than a machine for the oppression of one class by another, and that not less so in a democratic republic than under a monarchy," he made a profound observation, the more remarkable since at that time the origin of political democratic states was still surrounded with a romantic halo of libertarian phrases—which still inspired the Forty-Eighters.

Fortunately, thanks to the work of Beard, McMaster, and others, the origins of the American Republic are today available to all; and they demonstrate with utter clearness that *the Government of the United States was designed by its founders to protect the rich against the poor, property against the necessities of life and liberty, and the monopolistic minority against the majority.*

Pre-Revolutionary society in America was divided into three very sharply-defined classes: the upper class consisting of the clergy, professional men, merchants, landed proprietors and the great slave-holding planters in the South; the middle class, of shop keepers and farmers; and the comparatively unimportant lower class, of slaves, poor whites in the South, mechanics, indentured servants and apprentices—all of which had no votes. Except among the middle and lower classes, there was no discontent with the political institutions of the British Empire; on the other hand, there was a healthy contempt for Democracy, often expressed, among the well-to-do and educated.

Until the acts of the British Government began seriously to hamper *trade*—in other words, *property*—the upper class in the American colonies was not in any sense revolutionary; in fact, many of the framers of the Constitution had been *against* the Revolution. In any sense, the Revolution, for the Colonial upper class, was favored only insofar as it promised to protect their material interests. Like all Revolutions, however, it was precipitated and expressed by idealists, and carried through by the masses—in this case, the middle class—who saw in it the opportunity to establish a government in their own interests. These interests were expressed in the formula, "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness"—which did not refer to slaves and indentured servants at all, but to the vast majority of traders and farmers.

This was the element which wrote the Declaration of Independence, in the heat of the Revolutionary struggle, when, as in all Revolutions, the mass was dictating the slogans of the movement.

The eleven years of the confederation which followed, however, proved that human society was definitely embarked on the capitalist era, which was incompatible with those "natural rights"—that individualistic liberty so fondly embraced by the small property owners, as best suiting their free development in a land of unequalled opportunity.

The middle class whose services in the Revolutionary struggle had made them the dominant class in society, were jealous of their freedom and independence. Already the development of capitalism had begun to concentrate wealth in the hands of a few. Great corporations had already tied up immense tracts of land, and the banking interests in the towns had a monopoly of capital; these conditions had made the petty bourgeoisie a *debtor* class. The middle class therefore was in favor, as at later periods, of cheap currency, and of the violability of contracts. A small group of capitalists had secured control of the depreciated Congressional and State obligations issued to pay for the Revolution, and the middle class wished to wipe out this debt. And just as the great capitalists were in favor of a strongly centralized government, which would guarantee their speculative investments and mortgages, and protect this property with federal troops and police, so the middle class feared a centralized government, whose actions it might not be able to control as it controlled the separate state legislatures.

Attempts at oligarchy or dictatorship in each separate state might be opposed, if all other means failed, by a popular uprising. In fact, the eleven years of the Confederation saw many such insurrections. It is interesting to note here that *these insurrections were directed against the capitalists, who*

had got control of the state governments, by the middle class debtors. The culminating insurrection was Shays' Rebellion.

The situation is well described by Mr. Curtis, in his *Constitutional History of the United States*:

"A levelling, licentious spirit," says this old reactionary, "a restless desire for change, and a disposition to throw down barriers of private rights, at length broke forth in conventions, which first voted themselves to be the people and then declared their proceedings to be constitutional. At these assemblies the doctrine was publicly broached that *property ought to be common*, because all had aided in saving it from confiscation by the power of England. Taxes were voted to be unnecessary burdens the courts of justice to be intolerable grievances, and the legal profession a nuisance. A revision of the state constitution was demanded, in order to abolish the Senate, reform the representation of the people, and make all civil officers eligible by the people. . . ."

It was these revolts which furnished the immediate incentive to the adoption of the Constitution. The work of preparing the country for the capitalist *coup d'état* had been carried on carefully and tactfully for several years by Alexander Hamilton and James Madison—afterward President of the United States. In calling the Constitutional Convention of 1787, for instance, the leaders did not dare to suggest their real objects; the aim of the Convention, it was stated, was merely "to revise the Articles of Confederation." It was also carefully arranged that the delegates should not be elected by the people, or even by directly representative bodies, as had been done in the case of the Congress which issued the Declaration of Independence; instead, they were either chosen by the legislatures, or, more often, appointed by the Governors of the states. And it should be remembered that property qualification for the franchise existed in all the states, so that in no case was the lower, or working class, represented in the Convention.

And when the Convention finally met, it did its work in secret, behind closed doors, like the Peace Conference in Paris; and like the latter, in order to prevent the public from knowing what was going on, it even forced its members to promise not to talk to anyone outside. So that when the Constitution was finally completed, it was issued to the world in such a form that its real meaning, and the forces which produced it, were absolutely unknown to the colonists.

The majority of the signers of the Declaration of Independence were Revolutionary leaders, men representing the small property holders; while the majority of the framers of the Constitution were the bankers, speculators in the land and money, and the merchants. Many delegates to the Constituent Convention who had signed the Declaration of Independence refused to sign the Constitution, denouncing it as a "conspiracy"; among these was Benjamin Franklin.

James Madison, afterward President of the United States, who was chiefly responsible for the Constitution—which he described as having "the form and spirit of popular government while preventing majority rule"—expressed in 1785 the theory of economic interpretation in politics. He wrote:

"The most common and durable source of factions (parties, classes), has been the various and unequal distribution of property. Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. Those who are creditors, and those who are debtors, fall under a like discrimination. A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, grow up of necessity in civilized nations and divide them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views. The regulation of these various and interfering interests forms the principal task of modern legislation, and involves the spirit of party and faction in the necessary and ordinary operations of the government."

It will be seen by this that before the end of the eighteenth century the American capitalist class had discovered, and applied for its own advantage, what Karl Marx discovered more than sixty years later.

Listen once more to Madison, speaking before the Constitutional Convention, advocating that the vote be given to the propertied classes alone:

"In future times a great majority of the people will not only be without landed, but any other sort of property. These will either combine under the influence of their common situation; in which case, the rights of property and the public liberty will not be secured in their hands, or, which is more probable, they will become the tools of opulence and ambition. . . ."

Elbridge Gerry declared that all the evils experienced by the Confederation flowed "from the excess of democracy." Edmund Randolph said, "that the general object was to provide a cure for the evils under which the United States labored; that, in tracing these evils to their origin, every man had found it in the turbulence and follies of democracy;

that some check therefore was to be sought for against this tendency of our government. . . ." Alexander Hamilton, in urging a life-term for Senators, said that "all communities divide themselves into the few and the many. The first are the rich and well-born, and the other the mass of the people who seldom judge or act right." Gouverneur Morris, of New York, wanted to check the precipitancy, changeableness and excess" of the representatives of the people, by the ability and virtue of "great and established property-aristocracy; men who from pride will support consistency and permanency. . . Such an aristocratic body will keep down the turbulence of democracy." Gouverneur Morris showed the capitalist viewpoint of the Convention, when he boldly stated, "Life and liberty were generally stated to be of more value than property. An accurate view of the matter would, nevertheless, prove that *property was the main object of society If property, then, was the main object of government*, certainly it ought to be one measure of the influence due to those who were to be affected by the government." And finally, Mr. Madison again:

"An increase of population will of necessity increase the proportion of those who will labor under all the hardships of life and secretly sigh for a more equal distribution of its blessings. These may in time outnumber those who are placed above the feelings of indigence. (The poor may outnumber the rich.) According to the equal laws of suffrage, the power will slide into the hands of the former. No agrarian attempts have yet been made in this country, but symptoms of a levelling spirit, as we have understood, have sufficiently appeared, in a certain quarter (Shays' Rebellion), to give notice of a future danger."

Madison further advised the Convention that in framing a system which they wished to last for ages, they must not lose sight of the changes which the ages would produce in the forms and distribution of property.

The Convention did not. It finally framed a Constitution, which, while appearing to preserve popular government, in reality secured the rights and property of the minority against "the superior force of an interested and overbearing majority."

Liberals and "parliamentary" Socialists in this country are always pleading for the "minority rights" guaranteed by the Constitution. But the "minority" which the Constitution guarantees is not the one they are talking about; it is the permanent capitalist minority, and it is guaranteed against the will of the majority.

This is accomplished through the so-called "check and balance system", by which the President is indirectly elected, the members of the House of Representatives are elected in one way, the Senate in another, and finally, the most powerful body of all, the Supreme Court, is not elected at all, but appointed. These various bodies check each other's action, so that no popular majority can control the processes of legislation, except after a long and tedious process. Today even this possibility is removed, by the fact that the colossal financial interests absolutely own and control the government.

It is fascinating to study the history of these times—to discover, for instance, that most of the signers of the Constitution derived immediate personal wealth from its proclamation; that there was a conspiracy among the upper class of the colonies, in case the Convention failed, to organize an insurrection to overthrow "democracy" by force of arms; that out of the sixty-odd delegates elected, only thirty-nine signed the document, many withdrew from the Convention altogether, and an immense anger shook the middle class when it discovered, too late, what the Constitution meant; that the middle class had to threaten to refuse ratification before the first ten amendments, which constitute the Bill of Rights, were added to the document; and that the different state legislatures were persuaded to ratify the Constitution through the most shameless corruption by the capitalist interests—even going to the extent of bribery.

The first act of the new Government established by the Constitution, as was to be expected, was the "funding" of the public debt—that is to say, an arrangement to pay the badly depreciated state and Congressional obligations at their face value. This debt amounted to more than \$76,000,000. The holders of the depreciated bonds and notes—most of which they had purchased for a song—were given in exchange bonds of the new Government of the United States, which then proceeded to levy taxes upon the middle and working classes to pay the interest and principal. Thus at the very beginning of our Government, the little clique of bankers and speculators who framed the Constitution were given a vast fortune, the payment of which reduced

(Continued on page 6)

Left Wing Notes

THE Left Wing organization has decided to support the following nominee and asks all revolutionary Socialists to do likewise:
For Executive Secretary of Local New York:
Maximilian Cohen.

Notice to All Branches of Locals New York, Kings, Queens, Richmond, Astoria and Bronx.

At a meeting of the City Committee held on the 5th day of May, it was decided to call a City Convention, and that the basis of representation shall be:

"One delegate for every 50 members in good standing or major fraction thereof; that branches shall elect delegates directly."

You are therefore requested to send out a call to the branches instructing them to elect delegates to the convention on the basis decided by the City Committee.

The Convention will be held on June 14th and 15th, at Queens County Labor Lyceum, Cypress Avenue, Ridgewood, L. I. The order of business will be as follows:

- Consolidation of Locals into a Greater City Local.
- Taking action on Party Ownership of Press.
- Taking action on the Left Wing.
- Taking up the question of reorganization of branches of Local New York.
- Send the names of the delegates elected and the branches they represent to the secretary at the Queens Labor Lyceum, Myrtle and Cypress Avenues, Ridgewood, L. I.

Credentials to the Socialist Party City Convention should be in the hands of the delegates by Saturday morning at the latest.

All Comrades who still have subscription lists should send them in immediately. We need the money!
MAXIMILIAN COHEN.

All Left Wing Organizations and Branches are notified not to arrange any affairs for Sunday, August 24, 1919, the date of the Left Wing Picnic.

The unreorganized 23rd A. D. Branch 1, Kings, meets every Monday night at 1709 Pitkin avenue; organizer, Feistman. Attend every meeting.

The first session of the public speaking class will be held at the headquarters of the 17th A. D., 1538 Madison Avenue, next Monday, June 16, under the direction of Henry Engels. There has been a heavy registration. Our motto is a hundred Harlem speakers before the end of the summer.

CITY COMMITTEE MINUTES

- June 6, 1919
- Comrade Gitlow elected chairman.
- Credentials from Branch 2, 18th A. D. Kings. Lipner in place of Goldberg.
- Credentials from 1st Russian Branch.
- Credentials from 6th Russian Branch. Shoropky temporarily in place of Samiloff.
- Credentials from 7th Russian Branch, Danelwich.
- 1st A. D. Minority Group, Netzer.
- Local Kings County, Peters and Weinstein.
- Spanish Branch, Sasson and Masarala.
- Minutes of previous meeting read and adopted.
- Motion carried to have roll call and report of delegates after reading minutes at every meeting.
- Roll call followed.
- 2nd Russian Branch request that open air meetings be held on Russian Question. 20th Ukrainian branch requests City Committee that something be done to agitate for organization of workers along industrial lines.
- 3-5-10 A. D. instructs to report that branch went on record that no paid official be eligible on any committee.
- 8th A. D. that copies of the minutes of the City Committee be sent to every branch. To instruct delegates to the Left Wing National Conference to take up question of Unity Conference.
- 14th A. D. Kings wants provisions made for meetings and speakers.
- 4th Russian Branch speaker for Tuesday meeting to be held as protest against expulsion.
- 17 A. D. requests speakers for open air meeting. Reports also that their ball was a huge success and over five hundred dollars made by branch.
- Local Kings that local has been expelled. Also that charges were brought against Shiplacoff for voting in favor of expulsion of language groups.

COMMUNICATIONS

- From Frains giving vote of clever states for national referendums: Left Wing candidates received highest vote.
- From Lithuanian Branch, Boston, that it has joined the Left Wing.
- From Estonian Branch announcing picnic June 8th and requesting speaker to represent COMMUNIST.
- Executive Committee minutes of May 28th read and acted upon.
- On question of speakers, where there is a minority group, half of collection up to \$10.00 be donated to L. W. rest of motion carried that we charge for speakers, money to go to organization; no money to be paid to speakers.
- Motion carried that we raise a working fund of \$5,000 dollars by getting individual donations from one dollar up, for the maintenance of organization, publishing pamphlets and leaflets.
- Question of assessing each branch to cover expenses of delegates to N. L. W. C.
- Motion carried that Executive Committee proceed to carry out the work left by special committees.
- Educational Committee elected.

The New York COMMUNIST depends upon volunteer workers for its distribution throughout the city.

Each week's issue is ready for distribution on Thursday afternoon.

Come to the headquarters, 43 West 29th Street, Thursday, and get your bundle.

Now is the time to get the truth across. Make the Left Wing campaign among the rank and file a huge success by putting a COMMUNIST each week, in the hands of every party member.

Our motto is:—10,000 COMMUNISTS in Greater New York!

Special meeting of City Committee called for Wednesday evening.

Meeting adjourned.

FANNIE HOROVITZ, Rec. Sec'y

This resolution was adopted at the monthly meeting of Local Union County, June 6, 1919:

Whereas, the trend of world events and the experience of the Revolution in action have demonstrated the necessity for a clear cut definition of the Socialist position; and

Whereas, the growth of opportunism and bourgeois parliamentarism within the Socialist Party has made a re-statement of the revolutionary Socialist position imperative; and

Whereas, the tendency of the officialdom within the Party has been in contradiction with the revolutionary sentiments of the rank and file within the Party as manifested in the St. Louis program on the war; be it therefore

Resolved, that the Socialist Party delegates of Local Union County of the State of New Jersey assembled in their monthly meeting, in 709 Elizabeth avenue, Elizabeth, N. J., June 6, 1919, herewith indorse the Manifesto and Program of the Left Wing.

To National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party of the U. S. At the regular monthly meeting of Local Union County of New Jersey, held June 6, 1919, at Socialist headquarters, 709 Elizabeth avenue, a communication was read, received from State Secretary of N. J., Fred Harwood, stating that the seven Foreign Language Federations were suspended from the Party without a trial. Union County protests the action taken by the National Executive Committee.

Union County decided 36 against 4 to count the so-called "suspended" comrades as members of the Socialist Party.

This communication is sent to the National Executive Committee and Socialist press. *New York Call*, *NEW YORK COMMUNIST*, and *Revolutionary Age*.

Oakland, Cal., June 4th, 1919

Maximilian Cohen,
 New York

Comrade: Relative to yours of the 28th. Our local has tentatively elected delegates to the Left National Conference. The delegate elected is also a member of the California State Executive Committee and is in close touch with the membership.

According to the clipping you enclose we understand that our delegate is taxed \$25.00 and that the balance of his expenses will be paid by the Conference pool fund. Is this correct?

The State-wide mass conference of the California Party held May 30, 31 and June 1, swung heavily to the Left. Presume you have reports. Also of the attack on the State Office of the party here by Governor Stephens' hirelings. State Secretary and county organizer arrested without warrants, etc. (1:30 A. M., etc., etc.) Trials come up June 6 and 12 on Stephens' "criminal syndicalism" law.

Advise immediately if the above understanding is correct and if it will hold good for another local that has written us in this matter.

Yours in the cause,
 EDWIN B. SMITH

NOTICE

Owing to stress of work, Maximilian Cohen resigned as business manager of N. Y. COMMUNIST, to devote all his time to the duties of Executive Secretary of the L. W.

Benjamin Gitlow has been elected business manager in his place.

All communications pertaining to THE COMMUNIST should be addressed to

BENJAMIN GITLOW,
 43 W. 29th St.,
 N. Y. C.

All communications pertaining to the organization should be addressed to

MAXIMILIAN COHEN,
 43 W. 29th St.,
 N. Y. C.

Whereas, we desire to clearly place ourselves on record for, and openly and actively align ourselves with the revolutionary proletariat the world over, as at present expressed by the policies and tactics of the Communist Party of Russia (Bolsheviks), the Communist Labor Party of Germany (Spartacans) and other parties in harmony with them, be it

Resolved, that we, the Socialist Party of McKeesport, in Party membership meeting assembled this first day of June, 1919, adopt as our official expression the Manifesto and Program of the Left Wing Section of the Socialist Party of New York, as printed in *The Revolutionary Age*, March 22, 1919, and be it further

Resolved, that we pledge both financial and moral support to the Left Wing propaganda to the end that the National organization conform with the policies of this program, and be it further

Resolved, that all delegates, committees and officials of the Socialist Party of McKeesport adhere strictly to this Manifesto and Program.

To the Editor of THE COMMUNIST,

Dear Sir:

The following resolution was adopted at the last meeting of the 22nd and 23rd A. D.:

RESOLUTION OF PROTEST.

The members of the 22nd and 23rd A. D. learn with surprise from their organizer Comrade Weisbar that an election for Delegates to the International Congress and Members of the National Executive Committee should have been held by the Branch before May 16th, and that notification of this election was not received until three days before the expiration of the election period, thus preventing the comrades of this branch from registering their votes on these important matters.

The Branch at its regular meeting held May 21st, 1919, protests against the defective notification that prevented the Branch from voting on these questions, and asks that the Executive Committee of Local New York declare the entire election invalid, and set a date for a new election, simultaneously instructing Comrade Gerber to inform all branch organizers long enough in advance to enable them actually to hold the elections

JEANNETTE D. PEARL,
 Financial Secretary.

May 29, 1919.

Whereas the National Executive Committee has suspended the Russian, Lithuanian, Lettish, Ukrainian, Hungarian, Polish and South Slavic federations, and expelled the Michigan State organization, and

Whereas, the suspension and expulsion of the above organizations disfranchises about 30,000 Party members from participation in Party affairs, and

Whereas this action is unfair to our Party membership by refusing to allow them to be heard before the expulsion or suspension, be it therefore

Resolved by the Socialist Party of McKeesport in general membership meeting this first day of June, 1919, that we condemn this action taken by the National Executive Committee and we demand that the National Executive Committee immediately re-instate the suspended and expelled organizations, and we further demand

That the Party membership, and the Party membership only, decide the matter of the suspension and expulsion of these organizations, and be it further

Resolved that we send these resolutions to the National Executive Committee and to the Party Press with the request that all Locals and branches in the Socialist Party condemn this action of the National Executive Committee and demand that the suspended and expelled organizations be re-instated immediately.

GREATER NEW YORK CITY COMMITTEE SOCIALIST PARTY

To the State Executive Committee of the Socialist Party

Comrades: We, the undersigned, elected at the meeting of the City Committee, held June 2, 1919, were instructed to answer your communication of May 30, 1919, in reference to the calling of City Convention.

1. We the members of the City Committee emphatically deny the power of the State Executive Committee to rescind any action of the City Committee, except, if such action is a violation and contrary to the spirit of the State Constitution of the Socialist Party.

2. That the action of the City Committee in calling such convention was in obedience to a motion passed at a Joint Central Committee Meeting of all the Locals of Greater New York City held on March 7th, 1919. Your charge that the Left Wing City Committee of the Socialist Party was the instigator for the calling of this convention can not be true as there was no Left Wing City Committee Organization at the time of the holding of the above mentioned Joint Central Committee Meeting which instructed the City Committee to call this convention.

Furthermore, the delegates from Local Kings and Queens were instructed by their respective Central Committees to work and vote for the calling of this City Convention.

3. You further say that the City Committee has no power to call a city Convention, when it is a well known fact, that the present City Committee was created through a City Convention called by a temporary City Campaign Committee.

4. You also state that the Rules of the City Committee does not provide or authorize the City Committee to call a convention. A Convention, even by the narrowest interpretation is a Party Meeting, and only by a process of mental gymnastics can the State Executive Committee declare the City Convention illegal on the ground of it being a violation of the Rules of the City Committee which only empowers the City Committee to call Joint Central Committee Meetings and General Party Meetings. The Rules of the City Committee, section 11, reads as follows:—

"The City Committee shall call Joint Meetings of the Central Committees or General Party Meetings whenever it deems such meetings necessary."

(Note: that the rules does not read General Party Membership Meetings but General Party Meetings which without a question of doubt includes conventions and all Party Meetings.)

5. We desire to say that the State Executive Committee has been misinformed as to the vote on the question of calling a City Convention. Out of nineteen delegates attending, only four voted against motion for Convention. Nearly half of those delegates voting in favor were so-called Right Wing Delegates. The real fight was not on

the holding of a Convention, but on the method of electing delegates.

6. We, of the City Committee, feel that we have in no way violated the State Constitution or the Rules of the City Committee. On the contrary, we feel that the State Executive Committee is unlawfully exercising its powers in upholding the rule of a small minority who, at the present time, in spite of the efforts of the majority, are unlawfully maintaining their control of the Party machines in Locals New York and Bronx. By your action you are lending your aid to the violation of the most sacred Party principle and discipline, namely; the opportunity of the rank and file to initiate and determine for itself Party Policies and Tactics, and to that extent, the accusations you make against the Left Wing of disrupting and splitting the Socialist Party is hurled back at you and you will be held responsible to the Party Membership.

Fraternally submitted,
For City Committee,
EDWARD I. LINEGREF,
MAURICE L. PAUL,
ALBERT PAULY.

A General Party Membership meeting of Local Queens will be held this Monday, June 16th, 8.15 P. M. sharp. The order of business for the meeting will be as follows:

1. General discussion on the present crisis in the Socialist Party.

And the policies and tactics leading up to the same.

2. Action of National and State Executive Committees expelling entire State organization, Language Federations and Locals.

3. Revocation of the Charter of Local Queens.

Admittance to the meeting will be by membership card only. Members are requested to be on time as the questions are very pressing.

MAURICE L. PAUL,
Organizer, Local Queens.

ONE hundred and thirty-six delegates attended the opening of the Jewish Federation Convention which took place in Boston on June 1. The Right Wing got into action as soon as the proceedings opened. It elected its own credentials committee which proceeded to admit all Right Wingers, pass upon the validity of those holding proxies and deprive seventeen Left Wing delegates of seats on various flimsy pretexts. About fifty-three Left Wing delegates succeeded in being seated.

On the question of abolishing the "reform planks" in the Socialist Party platform, the fight between the two wings developed, ending in thirty-eight Left Wing delegates bolting from the convention when the Left Wing Manifesto and Program, which embodied their principles on the question at issue, was defeated.

Together with the seventeen delegates who had been deprived of seats by the Right Wing Credentials Committee the bolting delegates formed a convention in a hall below. This convention was immediately joined by twelve more delegates from Left Wing locals, who reported that as they were under instructions from their locals not to bolt they were unable to take part in the new convention, but that they refused to participate in the convention dominated by the Rights and were returning home. They further reported that they were in complete sympathy with the Left and would request their locals to join the Left Wing Federation then being formed.

It is stated that the number of delegates appearing at the convention did not constitute the full strength of the Left Wing, as many locals were forced to vote by proxy, owing to being unable to meet the traveling expenses. Locals such as Seattle, which are Left Wing, were forced to accept the proxy given them by the Secretary. Most of the western locals had to vote by proxy and in each case the vote was thrown to the Right Wing although many of these western locals are definitely known to be Left.

The Second Jewish Branch of New York, which has been re-organized by the Right Wing, sent five delegates, while eleven other members of the same branch were present and voting as proxies, though it was formed only a few days before the convention, and the rules state that no branch can send more than one delegate, if it has been organized less than three months.

The Left Wing Convention organized the Jewish Left Wing Section and elected a temporary secretary and temporary Executive Committee of nine. It is planned to hold another convention shortly to organize on a permanent basis.

The Left Wing, as shown in partial election returns, has swept the Socialist Party. Early returns indicate a complete victory for revolutionary So-

cialism, the conquest of the Party for the Communist International.

The official vote on International delegates from eleven states—Georgia, Virginia, Tennessee, Florida, Rhode Island, Maine, Kentucky, Arkansas, Minnesota, Michigan and Massachusetts, gives the following results:

John Reed, 7,679; Louis C. Fraina, 7,077; A. Wagenknecht, 5,423; C. Ruthenberg, 4,523; I. E. Ferguson, 2,538. These, the candidates receiving the highest vote, are all Left Wing candidates. The moderates of the Right Wing received these votes: Victor Berger, 1,139; Adolph Germer, 908; Seymour Stedman, 789; James Oneal, 778; A. I. Shipplacoff, 663; Algernon Lee, 565; John M. Work, 457.

In these eleven states, Kate Richards O'Hare has overwhelmingly beaten Morris Hillquit for International Secretary. Incomplete reports from other states indicate that the Left Wing has secured a substantial majority in all state organizations. This is the election that the moderates on the N. E. C. are trying to steal.

In the District 1 elections for National Executive Committee, returns from Maine, Rhode Island and Massachusetts give these results: Louis C. Fraina, 3,130; Nicholas I. Hourwich, 2,544; E. Lindgren, 1,472; Ludwig Lore, 940; Morris Hillquit, 838; James Oneal, 688; A. I. Shipplacoff, 519.

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

National Executive Committee

1. Rutherford 1,199 votes
2. Harwood 1,120 votes
3. Prevey 1,058 votes

International Delegates.

1. Reed 1,396 votes
2. Fraina 1,113 votes
3. Ruthenberg 781 votes
4. Wagenknecht 760 votes

International Secretary

Kate Richards O'Hare 865 votes
Morris Hillquit 344 votes

That the National Executive Committee arrange for an emergency Convention to be held as soon as can be arranged:

YES 1,269
No 87

Why Political Democracy Must Go

(Continued from page 4)

the American people to the position of debtors for half a century.

Another way by which the Constitution-framers profited. Although pledged to secrecy in the Convention, they used their knowledge of the proceedings to speculate in land and government securities and currency, before knowledge was made public.

An analogy with the present situation regarding the Peace Treaty with Germany, which has got into the hands of the great financial interests before it has reached the people, will readily suggest itself...

The Constitution so devised has been the framework of the American Government, and has consistently thwarted the will of the majority of the people ever since it was adopted, except in cases of an overwhelming majority. Patrick Henry, upon reading the document, exclaimed, "It is, sir, a most fearful situation when the most contemptible minority can prevent the alteration of the most oppressive government; for it may, in many respects, prove to be such."

Professor Burgess protests against the system for amending the Constitution, and in doing so, unwittingly criticizes the entire document:

"When in a democratic political society, the well-matured, long, and deliberately-formed will of the undoubted majority can be persistently and successfully thwarted, in the amendment of the organic law, by the will of the minority, there is just as much danger to the States from revolution and violence as there is from the caprice of the majority."

So much for the foundations of the American republic; so much for "the most advanced political democracy in the world." However, there have been times when the great capitalists in control of the Government, deliberately violated the Constitution, when it suited their interests; for example, just after the Civil War, when the Republicans in Congress forbade the Supreme Court to pass upon some of their reconstruction legislation, *on pain of being dissolved*. Toward the working-class, however the Supreme Court has become more and more the obstructive instrument of capitalist class-interest, and the Constitution an ever greater weapon against the workers; even to the point where it has upheld the conviction of Eugene V. Debs.

From time to time the Constitution has been amended, and its provisions interpreted, so as to widen and strengthen the political powers of the people in Government—in other words, our Government has become more "democratic."

But this is only in proportion as the great capitalists strengthen the invisible Government, and as

the processes of "political democracy" became less and less able to overthrow their absolute hegemony—in other words, the center of Government has finally shifted completely from the Capitol and the White House to Wall street. This became clear during the Great War.

My next and last article of this series will point out some ways by which the American capitalist class preserves and strengthens its power.

(To be concluded.)

A Reply to a Farmer

(Continued from page 3)

In societies where the class antagonisms have not yet been developed distinctly, this public power of coercion is small. This was formerly true in our own country. This public power of coercion "increases in the same ratio in which class antagonisms become more pronounced, and in which neighboring states become larger and more populous". The United States offers a splendid example of the truth of this. In the last two decades, class lines in America have become acutely pronounced. In the same period the public power of coercion has increased in direct proportion to the sharpening class divisions. The European class struggles and wars of conquest have also nursed the public power of coercion to a tremendous size. To maintain this power the citizens pay, taxes, and the State contracts debts, loans, and makes drafts on the future.

Engels has clearly shown that "the State is a product of irreconcilable class contradictions and conflicts. But having arisen among these conflicts,

it is as a rule the state of the most powerful economic class that by force of its economic supremacy becomes also the ruling political class and thus acquires new means of subduing and exploiting the oppressed masses. The antique State, was, therefore, the State of the slave owners for the purpose of holding the slaves in check. The feudal State was the organ of the nobility for the oppression of the serfs and dependent farmers. The modern representative State is the tool of the capitalist exploiters of wage labor." In a democracy the capitalist class exerts its power indirectly but with more certainty. Thus in America, through its wealth, the bourgeoisie, corrupts officials, form government and stock exchange alliances, and has a more sure hold on the agencies by means of which the will of the masses is baffled. Especially in a republic, for example America, "what is good for the ruling class is alleged to be good for the whole of society with which the ruling class identifies itself". Thus we see that the American Socialist movement must be particularly on guard against the numerous snares and delusions of bourgeois democracy.

(To be continued)

LEFT PROPAGANDA MEETING

Under the auspices of

1st A. D. Socialist Party, Bronx County

This Friday eve., June 13, 8 P. M.

at

LETTISH HALL

371 Willis Ave., near 143rd St., Bronx

Speakers:

BENJAMIN GITLOW
ISRAEL AMTER
EADMONN McALPINE
LOUIS BAUM, Chairman

Admission Free to All

LEFT WING PICNIC

Sunday, August 24th, 1919,

at

EASTERN BOULEVARD PARK

Eastern Boulevard and Fort Schuyler Road, Westchester, Bronx, N. Y.

Oriental Dances by Miss Katayama and Troupe.

Other attractions to be announced later. A Red Picnic—A Great Time—For a Red Cause. Men, Women and Children of the Working Class. Come and enjoy yourselves!

Picnic starts 10 A. M.

Arranged by the Left Wing Members of Bronx
Admission 30c in advance—35c at gate

Left Wing Mass Meeting

SUNDAY, JUNE 22, at 8 P. M.

At Manhattan Lyceum

66 E. 4th Street

Admission Free

Violence or Solidarity?

SCOTT NEARING has written a pamphlet with the curious title, "Violence or Solidarity?" or "Will Guns Settle It?" This pamphlet is a special plea against the use of violence in the Social Revolution, from the point of view of an extreme pacifist non-resistant.

The "institution of the dear love of comrades" must be built with love, comradeship, and the "instrumentalities of social organization." Force and violence, according to Comrade Nearing, can never bring the Socialist Commonwealth.

To illustrate the lengths to which Comrade Nearing goes, we must quote the essence of his argument applied to the present revolutionary period.

"The Hungarian Government has been changed from a monarchy to a Soviet Republic, so far as we know, without loss of life. By what means? By organization. The old world is dead; the new world is being born. Without violence the process is completed.

"In Germany, on the other hand, from the time that the revolution occurred until today, they have been fighting back and forth through the streets, the Spartacists attempting to establish a Soviet Government by the bayonet. When they succeed it will be in spite of their tactics, not because of them.

"The Russian Revolution was surrounded by a wall of bayonets at Brest-Litovsk. The workers, unarmed, found themselves face to face with the most powerful military machine that existed in the world at that time. Apparently they were at the mercy of militarism, but they began at home to establish an economic basis for comradeship. They gave the land to the peasants and the factories to the workers. When the facts became known, the German military was powerless, and in the end the German Revolution answered the infamous act of the imperialists at Brest-Litovsk.

"The Russians won their point through economic justice at home, propaganda and open diplomacy. Not their army but their philosophy and their example spread revolution over Europe.

"The Russians may fail in their great experiment of laying the economic basis for the institution of the dear love of comrades. If they fail in this the Red Army will help them fail. If they win the Red Army will stand in the way of the thing that they wish to accomplish . . ."

This is a unique interpretation of the European Revolutions—especially the Hungarian Revolution. The idea of Bela Kun as an apostle of "revolution by love" is slightly grotesque. How was the Hungarian Soviet set up? Simply by means of a vague "organization"? No. The Hungarian bourgeoisie abdicated in favor of the proletariat, for several very good reasons; first, they saw that the peace-terms of the Allied and Associated Powers would destroy them utterly, and Hungary with them—after all, proletarian rule would enlist the people to preserve the national wealth, which might later be restored to its original owners; second, capitalism was incapable of making war, or peace, or of reconstructing war-shattered society—and Hungarian capitalism didn't want to assume responsibility for the job; third, Karolyi and others saw the inevitability of the Social Cataclysm, and perhaps realized that there was only one way to prevent the confounding of all in one all-overwhelming ruin—only one constructive force in the world, the proletariat.

But before such lessons could be driven home, how much violence had been done, how many heroic proletarians had lost their lives on the barricades to prove their unalterable will! How had great Russia rocked on her foundations!

And was it accomplished peacefully after all? As we write the Tchekho-Slovaks and the Rumanians are attacking Soviet Hungary with arms furnished by the entente Powers. Capitalism is attempting to destroy the Hungarian Revolution by force, as it is the Russian Revolution. And Hungary, that millennial abode of brotherly love, has mobilized the revolutionary workers to defend the Socialist Fatherland.

What would Scott Nearing have Soviet Hungary do? Simply go out to meet the enemy with an olive branch in one hand and a pacifist pamphlet in the other? The destruction of Soviet Hungary and of Soviet Russia means that printing presses will be smashed, the teachers of "ideas" put to death; it means that a general massacre of the workers—pacifists as well as militants—will inundate the Revolution in waves of blood, as in Finland.

If there had been no Red Army in Russia, there would now be no Russian Revolution to stand as a beacon for the world's workers. Not the least part of the Russian Revolution is its ability to defend itself. It is true that the ideas of the Russian Revolution conquered Imperial Germany; it is also true that these ideas are the greatest defense of the Russian Revolution against the world. But in Russia

these ideas were put into life by an armed insurrection, and they are now being defended by a people in arms.

But let us examine what is the real incentive behind the Social Revolution. Comrade Nearing seems to think that the reason for revolution is entirely a moral one. He implies that the reason the working class wishes to take over the power, and ought to take over the power, is because such an action is right. The inference from his arguments is that all one has to do in order to persuade the vast majority of the people that Socialism is best, is to employ the weapons of peaceful argument and propaganda.

But the question is not whether Socialism is morally right, the point is that the Socialist Commonwealth is the only possible way to save civilization and reconstruct human society. And, while five or six centuries of peaceful argument, unhampered by the capitalist political state, might conceivably convince a majority of the working people to get together in a general strike accompanied by passive resistance, such tactics are Utopian now, when the Social Revolution is upon us.

The capitalist class is not going to be convinced of its moral duty to abolish itself, no matter how great a majority of the workers decide that this is right. The general strike is in itself an act of violence, and provokes violence in return, which must be resisted by the strong hand of proletarian dictatorship. Capitalism is rushing toward its doom with tremendous speed, and the crash will not wait upon the peaceable education of the working class. Even in its death throes, capitalism is not going to allow the workers to take hold of the shattered machinery of civilization without a battle.

Comrade Nearing offers the original opinion that the reason why the German Communists failed to seize the government, was because they attempted an armed insurrection: and that if they do succeed it will be in spite of their use of force. At the same time he slurs over the fact that the Russian Bolsheviks accomplished their seizure of the power by force of arms. In Germany the Spartacist risings were not against the government as such, but against the capitalist class, which, through the treachery of the Majority Social Democrats, had been included in the government,—in spite of its long and bloody history of repression and imperialistic exploitation. There is no way to meet the violence of the capitalist class except with violence. And it was the Scheidemann Socialists who performed the role of executioners of the workers in the interests of the German bourgeoisie.

In the *Milwaukee Leader*, Victor Berger's paper, an editorial accuses the Left Wing of wanting "violence"—of aspiring to "bloody uprisings." The appearance of Comrade Nearing's pamphlet at this time, when the Socialist movement is split into two factions—that of Scheidemann Socialism and that of Revolutionary Socialism—has the same effect of saddling the Left Wing with the anarchistic tactics of the Black International.

We resent the implication that we stand for violence because it is violence; and that we are against "solidarity". The Left Wing advocates the strong and close organization of the working class in order that it may assume the State power for the working class, and that it may defend the Social Revolution from the brutal violence of the capitalists.

And if Comrade Nearing is opposed to this—if he thinks that he will be allowed to preach "the Social Revolution by Brotherly Love," he is mistaken, and what's more, he is no Revolutionary Socialist.

"Violence or Solidarity"? *Solidarity is violence*, and is met with the black-list, police clubs, and machine guns.

The economic foundation for "the institution of the dear love of comrades" is not to be won without blood and tears. Pacifism disarms the working class, and exposes it to the most fearful dangers.

There is no place for pacifists in the Social Revolution.

The Telescope

WHEN ordering your copy of *The Socialist*, be sure and get what you ask for. Don't be put off with "something just as good". Look your copy over well before giving any money. Insist on getting what you ask for. None genuine without the label.

It appears from the last issue of *The Socialist* that the stuff it has been putting out is too raw even for the members of the Right Wing, and so the editors of the official organ of "The Pink Terror" are attempting to lead their readers to believe that they are not responsible for what they write—something by the way, which we could have told them long ago. The whole front page of the last issue is devoted to what purports to be an expose of a "fake" number—as if each issue was not a fake.

We suggest that the so-called "fake" *Socialist* was an attempt of the Right Wing leaders to see how much in the way of "sausage Socialism" their followers would stand for.

Pathetic Figures, No. 2: Berenberg reading the "fake" Socialist.

We wish to apologize for our mistake when we ventured the opinion that Oneal would be elected as an International delegate. We have seen some of the returns since.

Judging from the returns so far made public it would appear that when the National Executive Committee was picking men to represent the Party in Europe, it was very successful in picking those in whom the membership had least confidence.

Louis Waldman indignantly denies that he was presented with a bouquet of pink roses. He says the bouquet was composed of carnations and that they were originally red in color, only they had become slightly withered owing to the heat produced by the vigor of the applause.

אברהם יצחק שוילמאן that deniable Yankee, is boasting that he made the motion to suspend the foreigners from the Socialist Party.

The Communist Book Department

The Communist asks all members of the Left Wing to order literature through our new Book Department. From time to time we shall publish books and pamphlets of importance to revolutionary Socialists.

A New Letter to the Workers of Europe and America. . .
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Price, 5 cents. Bundles, 10 to 100, 3½ cents.
Lots of more than 100, special rates.

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Official Report of the Russian Soviet Government on all Activities and Achievements of the Proletarian Republic from November 7th, 1917, to December, 1918. About 400 pages. Paper cover.
Price \$1. Special Rates for quantities.

Send all communications to Benjamin Gitlow, Business Manager THE N. Y. COMMUNIST, 48 West 29th Street, New York City

\$5,000 For Revolutionary Socialism

The National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party has decided to exterminate the revolutionary elements in the party by expelling them.

It is following the bourgeois tactics of Local New York, the committee that smashed the Party locally by expelling 22 branches.

The State Executive Committee of New York has appointed a committee of three (!) with full power to expell any local that becomes Bolshevik and adopts the Left Wing Program: Locals Queens, Rochester, Buffalo, Utica and Kings are about to be expelled. Bronx is to be re-organized.

The Party is going left. The revolution against reaction has assumed gigantic proportions. The membership is determined in its support of uncompromising revolutionary principles.

Morris Hillquit wants the decks cleared. He asks for a split in the Party. He repudiates the Third International.

Beaten by the membership the old leaders of the National Executive Committee disregard the Party referendums. It declares the votes of the rank and file void.

The N. E. C. repudiates the Third International, the International of the Bolsheviki, after the Party members by an overwhelming majority have voted to affiliate and participate.

Repudiate these brutal, disruptive and unprincipled tactics.

Rally now to the support of Socialism in America.

Help the Left Wing carry on its fight for revolutionary principles.

The Left Wing carries on the fight for the rank and file.

It carries on the fight for the 40,000 members of the seven foreign federations of the Party that have been expelled because they were FOREIGNERS and BOLSHEVIKS.

THE LEFT WING PUBLISHES

The New York Communist

the paper that in America enunciates the communist principles and whole heartedly supports the Bolsheviki of Russia and the Spartacans of Germany.

The Left Wing is being attacked now on all sides by the reactionaries in the party, by the New York Call, by the capitalist press and by the Government.

MONEY HAS BEEN SPENT AND MORE IS NEEDED.

To wipe out our debt, to continue the publication of The New York Communist and to continue to carry on this important fight we appeal for \$5,000.

SHOW THE RIGHTS WHERE OUR MONEY COMES FROM!

Send contributions to

MAXIMILIAN COHEN, 43 W. 29th St., at once

\$5.000 for a united party on revolutionary principles—a solid front against capitalism—victory for the working class.